



Policy Attachment: 15.11 Adoption Assistance

Subject:	Criteria for Documenting Full-Time School Attendance for Children 18, 19, and 20 Years of Age
-----------------	--

Additional Information:

When a child is receiving adoption assistance, attending school full-time, and are 18, 19, or 20 years of age, the Department of Children's Services must document continued eligibility for adoption assistance payments.

As of December 2007, adoptive parents are required to submit verification of their child's full-time school attendance at least quarterly. This requirement is different than the verification needed for the date of birth report in that adoptive parents must submit documentation of their child's full time school attendance directly Central Office Adoption staff for the time period within the quarter verification is required. **Failure to submit quarterly documentation will result in adoption assistance payments being stopped.**

For Adoption Assistance Agreements made prior to October 1, 1997, and the funding source is **State**, adoption assistance payments may continue until the child reaches the age of 21 if they are attending any accredited school full time whether post secondary or high school.

Adoption Assistance Agreements made after October 1, 1997, and the funding source is **State**, adoption assistance payments will end once the child graduates from high school or reaches the age of 19, which ever comes first.

Procedures for Processing & Documenting Full-Time School Attendance

1. DCS Central Office Adoption staff will send notifications to adoptive parents, requesting full-time school verification 45 days prior to the date verification will be due in Central Office. **Verification received for full-time school attendance must be within the quarter or specified time frame information is requested.**
2. If documentation is not received in Central Office 20 days after the initial request, a second reminder notice will be sent to adoptive parents requesting documentation and informing them that their adoption assistance payments will end if verification is not received documenting their child's full-time school attendance.
3. All verified information will be entered on a data base containing state funded children 18, 19, and 20 years of age. This data base will be maintained by Central Office Adoption staff to be utilized for validating or ending adoption assistance payments.
4. When verification is not received within the 45 days of the due date, adoption assistance payments will end unless approved by Central Office Adoption staff.
5. For cases where verification is received and validated by Central Office Adoption staff, those cases shall remain active.
6. Verified information will be forwarded to Central Office Fiscal staff indicating whether payments should continue or end.
7. Central Office Fiscal staff will forward a copy of verified information to Regional Designees.

8. Regional Designees will have 7 calendar days to review and make any request for changes or adjustments.
9. If changes/adjustments are justified, the data base will be updated and forwarded to Regional Designees and Central Office Fiscal staff.
10. Regional Designees will ensure the updated information is reflected on the form 16.
11. Verified information and all supporting documentation will be forwarded to Regional Designees no later than 15 days after each due date by Central Office Adoption Staff.